

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTION

June 26, 1974

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

MEMORANDUM FOR: BRENT SCOWCROFT
FROM: STEPHEN LOW *sl*
SUBJECT: General Walters' Suggestion for Message from
President to Brazilian Veterans

A few weeks ago Congressman Wayne Hays publicly questioned the Brazilian role in the Italian campaign during World War II. His comments were insulting and inaccurate, and the Brazilian military and press resented them, though the Administration was not blamed.

On June 21 Secretary Schlesinger delivered a prepared statement to the visiting Brazilian War College, recognizing Brazil's significant contribution to the Allied war effort in Italy. The statement was repeated by USIA in Brazil and prominently played in the major newspapers there. Secretary Schlesinger's comments were interpreted by the press as the Administration's response to Congressman Hays.

General Walters also addressed the Brazil War College during its visit. His strong off-the-record comments reinforced Schlesinger's public statement.

Therefore, I believe Congressman Hays' remarks have been adequately and appropriately answered and the matter now satisfactorily set to rest in Brazil. Any further attention to it on our part would be an over-reaction and could be misunderstood.

Furthermore, I question the appropriateness of the President's using the Deputy Director of the CIA as a channel for a public communication to a foreign private group, even though Walters is going there in a private capacity. As a result, I recommend against a Presidential message of the kind suggested by General Walters.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you inform General Walters by phone of your feeling that a message from the President is not necessary.

NSS Review Completed.

sl Approve _____ Disapprove

Alternatively, that you sign the suggested memo to General Walters at Tab A.

Attachments:

Tab A -- Suggested reply to Walters
Tab B -- Incoming corres.

2644

18 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Major General Brent Scowcroft
Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

SUBJECT : Suggested Message from President Nixon
to WW II Brazilian Expeditionary Force
Veterans

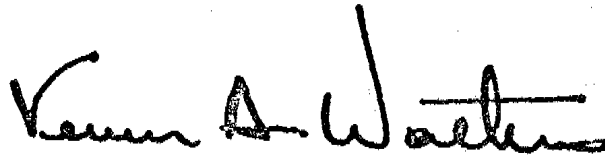
25X1

Having served with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force in WW II, I am a founding member of the Brazilian equivalent of the VFW. They have just unanimously awarded me their highest award. I intend to go to Rio to receive it on 16 July. This is strongly concurred in by the Ambassador [redacted] particularly in the light of the recent remarks by Representative Wayne Hays who, in opposing military assistance programs, said, "The Brazilians did not get within 500 miles of the front". This has aroused vast indignation in Brazil that could be used against the U.S. Most of this could be undone if I could read to the "Veterans of the Italian Campaign" a short message from the President showing that he recognizes their participation.

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The facts are that the Brazilians sent 25,334 soldiers to Italy in WW II and one fighter squadron. They lost 466 dead and had 1577 wounded and 1145 injured. From torpedoes they had 4000 dead. They declared war on August 22, 1942, and were prepared to send 3 Divisions to Italy if we wanted them.

I have attached the draft of a message which I would read after saying, "I bring greetings from a fellow veteran who has made an immeasurable contribution to peace all over the world, The President of the United States, Richard Nixon".



Vernon A. Walters
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

As we continue our fight for a generation of peace,

I am delighted to send warm greetings to the Association

of the Veterans of the Italian Campaign. All Americans

~~remember how our Brazilian comrades fought side by~~

side with us in Italy on the ground, in the air and all over

the seas.

We honor your gallant comrades who fell in the

battle for freedom and we honor you who participated in

the struggle.

With warm greetings,

Richard Nixon